GEOGRAPHIC NEWS BULLETINS

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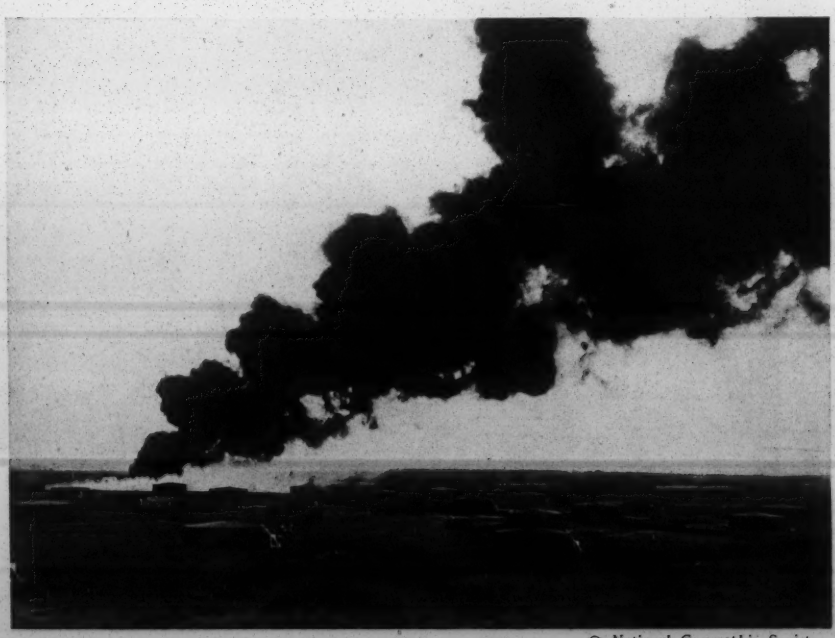

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PETROLEUM STORAGE TANK BURNING ON A "TANK" FARM

(See Bulletin No. 2)

HOW TO OBTAIN THE BULLETINS

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Gold Enters the Fate of Panama City Again

GOLD seems to be forever woven into the fate of Panama City. The discovery of a gold reef in Panama is reported.

The conquering of Peru by Pizarro and his men started Panama City with a gold spoon in its mouth. To Panama City the Spanish conquistadors shipped the gold drained from the Incas. From Panama City it was carried over the mountain divide and reshipped to Spain. This very gold brought the city's first downfall. Pirates sacked the port for its treasure.

Gold in California Revives the City

The discovery of gold in California, however, gave it a new lease on life. American capital put through the trans-Isthmian railroad in record time. Sleepy old Panama City at the Pacific terminus had a "boom" second only to that of the destination of its visitors.

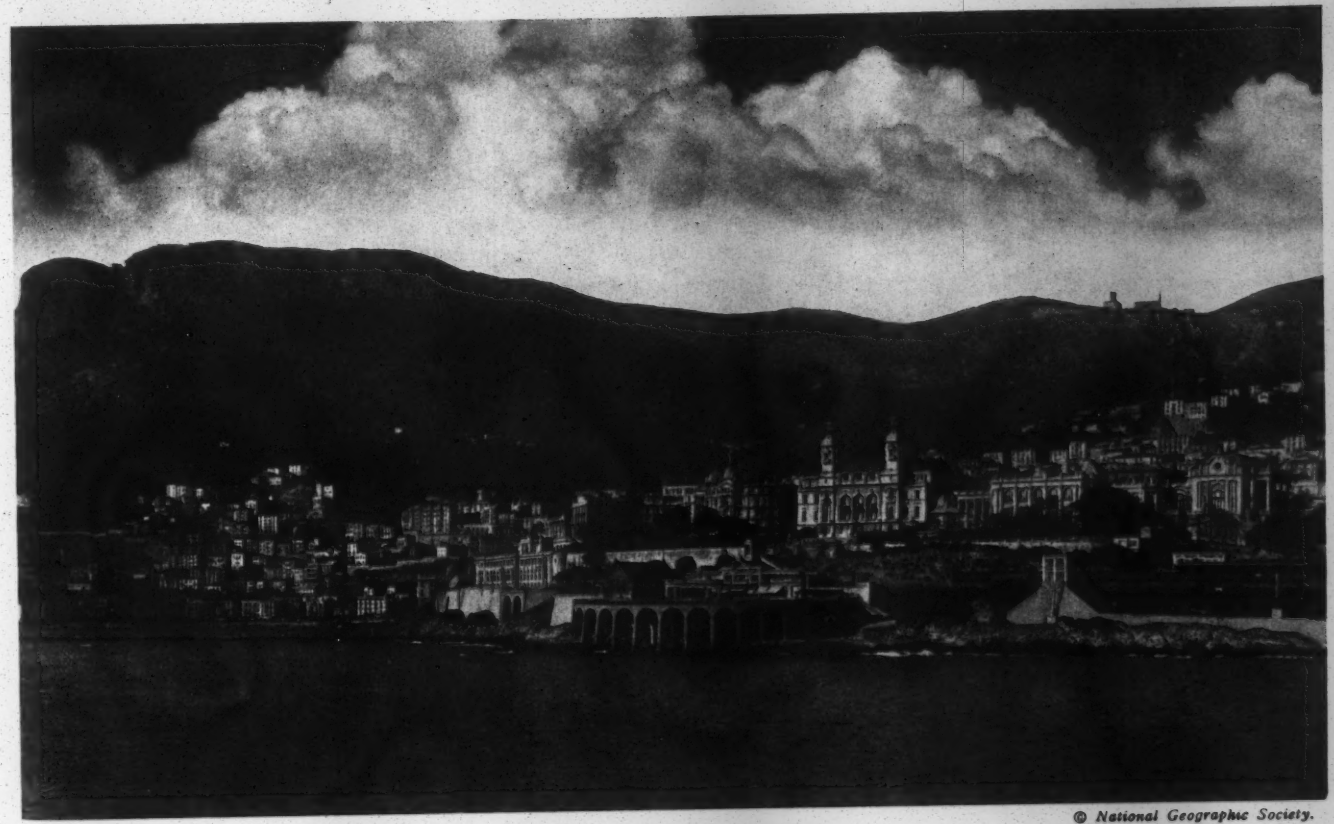
Completion of the trans-continental railroads in the United States brought another slump which lasted until the French and later the American canal projects started. America, through President Roosevelt, had a share in making the city a national capital instead of the seat of a Colombian province.

Panama perpetuates one of the greatest of geographic jokes on those who visit it. From the sea wall promenade one can see the sun rise majestically from the broad bosom of the Pacific, which to most Americans is the proper place only for the setting sun. And when one sails from Panama City to Colon, the Atlantic terminal of the canal, the direction is from southeast to northwest, instead of from west to east as might reasonably be expected. As one writer phrases it, "there is something crooked about this." And so there is, but the crookedness is to be found in the geography of the Isthmus, which makes a broad "S" curve, like an expansion bend in a pipe-line, before it finally links the two continents.

Churches Built to Resist Siege

Although the present city of Panama dates from the 17th century, it is considered historically the new city. This is to distinguish it from Old Panama, now in ruins, a few miles to the east. The present canal and railroad route was not the high road of the old Spanish conquistadores. Their "Camino Real," or royal highway, started at Old Panama and ran generally north to Porto Bello, now also in ruins. This was a longer route but it was higher and generally free from lowlands and swamps. Old Panama was entirely destroyed by the notorious pirate Henry Morgan, later Sir Henry, in 1671. The new city was built shortly afterward on a high rocky spit of land running out into a wide blue bay of the Pacific.

Gold and jewels and other precious relics were pouring over the Isthmus in steady streams from Peru, so no pains nor money were spared in making the new city as fine, and finer, than the old. Where Old Panama lacked sufficient fortifications the new metropolis bristled with heavy walls, battlements, heavy guns and other means of defense. Most of the buildings were constructed of stone and masonry, with sides from 3 to 4 feet thick, ironclad doors, and no windows below the second story. Thick walls and no openings near the ground



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MONTE CARLO AND THE CASINO

This pleasure palace which is famous around the world is under fire by the citizens of Monaco, some of whom wish to abolish it. Fortunes have been won and lost over the tables in the Casino. Curiously enough it is operated by the "Sea Bathing Society" (see Bulletin No. 5).

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How an Oil Tank Farm Fire Affects Everyone

SIMULTANEOUS disasters have hit the oil industry. Within a single week 8,500,000 barrels of oil were lost in the fire at the San Luis Obispo, California, tank farm, lightning ignited three other storage tanks at the Brea field 250 miles south, and two tankers were wrecked at New Orleans.

The San Luis Obispo fire is said to be the greatest calamity by fire ever sustained in the history of the American petroleum industry. Estimates put the loss at $18,000,000 dollars. The blaze consumed about three per cent of California's oil production for the current year.

Storage tanks with their attendant danger of fire have been a special feature of California development of the petroleum industry. The network of pipe lines covering the Middle Atlantic, Middle West, Texas and lower Mississippi Valley drain off the oil almost as fast as it is brought up in these vast fields. Most of this oil goes directly to the refineries. California must export most of her oil by tank steamer. This necessity has required the building of the vast tank farms. Despite the best precautions known to science the danger of a fire such as recently occurred, is always present.

Thousands of Miles of Pipe for Oil

Significant facts about the pipe lines of Eastern United States and the development of the petroleum industry in general, are contained in a communication to the National Geographic Society.

"Credit is often due to the silent partner in a business, and the marvelous growth of our oil industry owes much to its own transportation system, unseen and unknown by most citizens, yet far more efficient than the railroad lines of which we are so proud.

"Beginning with four miles of iron pipe laid down in western Pennsylvania at the close of the Civil War, this system now embraces a huge network of buried pipes from four to eight inches in diameter, trunk lines and laterals, aggregating nearly 30,000 miles.

"Along these hidden transportation lines there are pumping stations every 40 miles or so, but the daily circulation of oil in these long arteries is appreciated only by the oil operators who sell their product at one end and the refiners or shippers who receive it at the other end.

"Another measure of this pipe-line system is given in the fact that it would take approximately two days' flow from 200,000 wells simply to fill these pipes."

When Gasoline Was Bought at a Drug Store

The San Luis Obispo fire has reflected itself in higher prices for gasoline. While the motorist will appreciate this fact, he will not readily see that any calamity in the petroleum business affects innumerable other products and industries.

"Petroleum's rank among the minerals is won," continues the communication, "not by attractive appearance, but by sheer usefulness. Few of us fully appreciate how essential this mineral oil is in the world economy or realize all the changes that have come about in its use within a decade or two.

Bulletin No. 2, May 3, 1926.

showed that although the Spaniards trusted in God they built their churches to resist a siege.

One of Panama's sightseeing lions is the famous "flat arch" of the ruined church of San Domingo. This church was planned and built by Dominican monks, but three times one of the important archways fell when the supports were removed. Finally a monk, who was not supposed to be an architect, had a dream and produced a new plan. When the arch was completed he stood under it with folded arms as the supports were taken away. Fortunately, not only for his reputation as a builder but his life as well, it stood. As it is almost flat, built of ordinary bricks in a country where earthquakes are not unknown, it is really a marvelous bit of engineering.

The United States Makes it One of Healthiest Cities in Tropics

Although Panama City is not actually in the Canal Zone, nor is it on the Canal, complete jurisdiction has been granted the United States over all matters relating to sanitation and quarantine. As a result Panama has been transformed from a malarial death trap to one of the healthiest cities in the Tropics. Streets have been widened and straightened, sewers have been laid and other sanitary measures put into effect.

Bulletin No. 1, May 3, 1926.

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TAKING A BATH IN THE STREETS OF PANAMA CITY

When the United States took control of the Canal Zone they found Panama City with muddy streets filled with debris. It was not an attractive example of Tropical cities. Although Panama City is the capital of the Republic, the United States has control of sanitation and the water supply and has made out of this city a clean, healthful, beautiful place.

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The Cougar, Killer or Coward?

DISCUSSION of the fierceness of the cougar has aroused wide interest in the Northwest. One writer's claim that the cougar was a man-killer has brought some protests from westerners.

"The cougar, or mountain lion, while powerful enough to be dangerous to man, is in reality extremely timid," says a communication to the National Geographic Society from Dr. E. W. Nelson.

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COUGAR KITTEN

"Owing to its being a potentially dangerous animal, the popular conception of it is that of a fearsome beast, whose savage exploits are celebrated in the folk-lore of our frontier. As a matter of fact, few wild animals are less dangerous, although there are true accounts of wanton attacks upon people. There are instances similarly rare of buck deer and moose attacking. The cougar has a wild, screaming cry which is thrillingly impressive when the shades of evening are throwing a mysterious gloom over the forests. In the mountains of Arizona one summer a mountain lion repeatedly passed along a series of ledges high above my cabin at dusk, uttering this loud weird cry. It is popularly supposed to resemble the scream of a terrified woman.

A Fierce Enemy of Live Stock

"The mountain lion is usually nocturnal, but in regions where it is not hunted it not infrequently goes abroad by day. It is a tireless wanderer, often traveling many miles in a single night, sometimes in search of game and again in search of new hunting grounds. I have repeatedly followed its tracks for long distances along trails. In northern Chihuahua, Mexico, I once tracked one for a couple of miles from a bare rocky hill straight across the open, grassy plain toward a treeless desert mountain some eight of ten miles away, for which it was heading.

"Although inoffensive as to people, this cat is such a fierce and relentless enemy of large game and live stock that it is everywhere an outlaw.

Stuns Prey by Its Great Weight

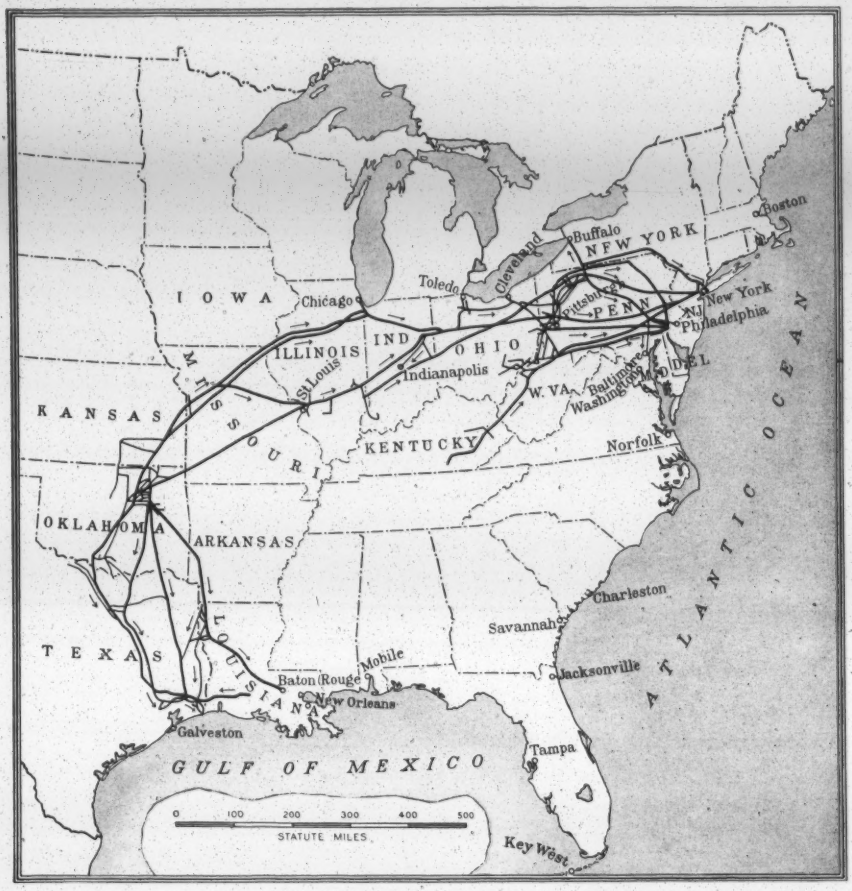
"A mountain lion usually secures its prey by a silent, cautious stalk, taking advantage of every cover until within striking distance. Then, with one or more powerful leaps, it dashes the victim to the ground with all the stunning impact of its weight.

"Vanilla" Flavoring from an Oil Well Too

"There are said to be 300 or more products of petroleum, each with its own use. Some of these products serve merely our convenience, such as the artificial 'Vanilla' flavoring or the cover of paraffine on the jar of jelly or marmalade; others were found during the war period to be absolutely essential to industry on a large scale—for example, the heavy oil used in tempering steel plates.

"The story of the petroleum industry in the United States extends back only sixty-seven years. On August 28, 1859, oil was struck in the Drake well, near Titusville, in northwestern Pennsylvania, and when the pumping began the oil flowed in a tiny stream of 40, and later only 15, barrels a day; but since that day of small things the tide of oil has mounted higher and higher; 5 million barrels were produced in 1870, 26 million in 1880, 45 million in 1890, 63 million in 1900, 209 million in 1910, and 356 million barrels in 1918, and 763 million in 1925."

Bulletin No. 2, May 3, 1926 (over).



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A SKETCH MAP SHOWING THE ELABORATE OIL PIPE-LINE SYSTEM WHICH FORMS A NETWORK BENEATH THE SURFACE OF THE EASTERN HALF OF THE UNITED STATES.

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Photographic Expeditions to Record Color of World Scenes

THE National Geographic Society has a number of photographic expeditions out in widely different parts of the world.

Jacob Gayer, of The Society's staff, has been in Central America and the West Indies, where he conducted a photographic survey extending over several months. Gayer was a member of the MacMillan Arctic Expedition last summer when he made the first natural color photographs ever taken in Arctic Regions. He obtained many beautiful studies in color of the picturesque countries of the Spanish main and their unique Indian life.

Guest of a Chinese Prince

One of the most colorful regions in the world, in its native costumes, is the Balkan Peninsula. Hans Hildenbrand has been sent here to work along the Dalmatian coast. Later he will travel through Yugoslavia and back into eastern Europe as far as Hungary and Rumania.

Gervais Courtellemont, one of the world's foremost experts in autochrome photography, has been commissioned to travel through France and Belgium and add new color plates to The Society's already large collection of natural color photographs of that part of Europe.

In the Far East Joseph F. Rock is now in a remote province of China as the guest of the Prince of Choni.

Mr. Rock is the plant explorer whose expeditions into Burma resulted in the discovery of the tree that produces chaulmoogra oil, used in the treatment of leprosy, and whose more recent expedition under the auspices of the National Geographic Society into Western Yunnan and Tibet brought to America the blight-proof chestnut tree and discovered the black rhododendron.

Color Plates Dispatched Half Way Round the Earth

He recently wrote that he is enjoying the hospitality of this Prince and that they have become fast friends. The Prince placed at Mr. Rock's disposal for the winter one of the buildings in the lamasery at his capital and he is experiencing unusual winter comfort due to the loan by the Prince of a European stove. The explorer has become so well established in this faraway community, where few white men have visited, that he is admitted to the religious ceremonies of Lamaism. He is taking photographs, with the help of the Prince, of religious activities which have rarely been seen, much less photographed, by white men.

Because of the unusually colorful costumes used by these Lamas in their ceremonies and the extraordinary opportunity Mr. Rock has to photograph them, he has cabled for equipment to make natural color plates of these remarkable subjects. With the cooperation of the Chinese Legation in Washington, a consignment of plates with color screens and special lenses has been dispatched to him by way of Peking. The equipment had to be specially packed in small boxes within larger ones. When the end of the railroad is reached and the boxes are to be transported by coolies or camels these smaller boxes will be adapted to coolie or camel packs.

"In a beautiful live-oak forest on the mountain of San Luis Potosi I once trailed one of these great cats to the spot where it had killed a deer a short time before, and could plainly read in the trail the story of the admirable skill with which it had moved from cover to cover until it reached a knoll at one side of the little glade where the deer was feeding. Then a great leap carried it to the deer's back and struck the victim to the ground with such violence that it slid 10 or 12 feet across the sloping ground, apparently having been killed on the instant."

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THE MUNICIPAL MARKET IN PANAMA CITY

The "Ditty Box Guide Book," given to members of the United States Navy fleet before landing at Panama, gives this version of the origin of the nickname "spiggoty," applied by Americans to the natives of Panama: "When the Americans first arrived on the Isthmus the cab-drivers would shout, 'Me speak it, the English.' This soon changed to 'spickety,' and then to 'spiggoty.' Thenceforth the Panamanians were 'spiggoties' " (see Bulletin No. 1).

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Monaco Citizens Propose to Abolish Monte Carlo Casino

WILL Monte Carlo live or perish?

The principality of Monaco is in tumult over this question. A section of the Monacan populace wants to do away with the world-notorious Casino. Although this pleasure palace pays the entire tax bill of Monaco, some of the citizens at least would like to see the Casino "blown into the sea."

Actually the income is from the "Sea Bathing Society." Sea bathing is still enjoyed in Monaco but there are few bathers who know that they are not really bathing in the municipality of Monaco or of Monte Carlo, but in the commune of Condamine, which is much the largest of the three towns in the petty state. Condamine may suggest bathing to a few, but Monte Carlo and Monaco suggest something quite different to nine men, or women, out of ten.

Secret of State's Prosperity

The secret of Monaco's ability to derive so good a living from the sea is due to the fact that the "Societe des Bains de Mer" owns and operates the famous Casino. In the gaming rooms of this place one can play roulette or *trente-et-quarente*, another game of chance.

The principality of Monaco has its own flag and its own postage stamps, which are very popular with the visitors. It also has its own currency. Although a player can place a five franc wager in roulette, it was never worth while for Monaco to issue any currency except 100-franc pieces.

Aside from the Casino and the oceanographical museum, the principal building of Monaco is the Cathedral of St. Nicholas.

The palace in which the late Prince of Monaco lived when he returned to his home was once a Genoese castle. It was greatly enlarged in the seventeenth century in what has later come to be known as the Renaissance style.

Citizens May Not Play in Casino

Until 1911, the Prince was an absolute ruler, but on January 7 of that year a constitution was provided. There is a National Council, which is elected by universal suffrage, including women. There are limitations to the rights of the inhabitants since none of them is accorded the privilege of playing at the gaming tables.

Monaco is situated along a beautiful strip of coast between Nice and Mentone and has a small harbor in which water festivals are held. The motor boat races of Monaco are famous throughout Europe. The land surface is hilly and picturesque and a hairpin road leads up to La Turbie, situated between Dog's Head Hill and the Hill of Justice. It was here that Augustus, lacking a corps of technical experts, delimited a boundary between Gaul and Italy.

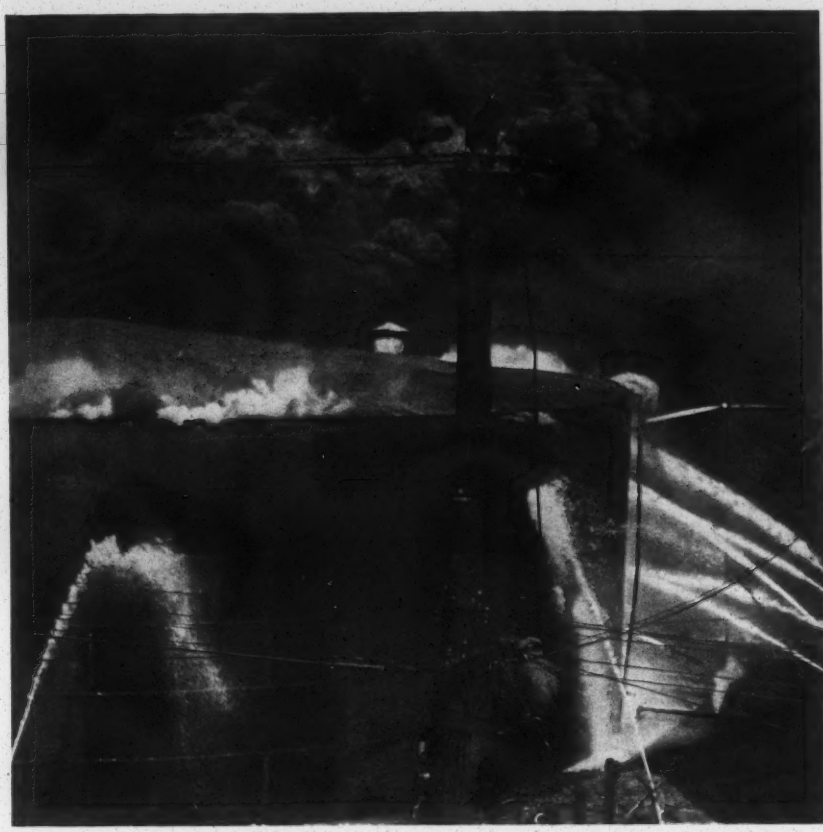
Monaco imports coal and wine and exports olive-oil and perfume. Trade and industry are unimportant but Monaco will probably be able to collect its tidy little annual revenue of ten thousand pounds a square mile until 1927, when the rate automatically increases by one eighth.

To Record the Colorful Life and Rugs of Bokhara

Maynard Owen Williams, The Society's staff European correspondent, is at present making his headquarters in Beirut, Syria. During the winter he has been working throughout Asia Minor, the Holy Land and Greece, placing special emphasis on natural color photography. In the spring he will proceed to the Russian Trans-Caspian regions from which he will bring back many color plates from such places as Bokhara, Samarkand, Ferghana and Merv.

Under the personal direction of Dr. Frederick V. Coville, Chairman of the Research Committee of the National Geographic Society, and with the cooperation of the California Academy of Sciences and its Director, Dr. Barton W. Evermann, Charles Martin, chief of The Society's photographic laboratories, will photograph the wild flowers of the Pacific slope from the Mohave Desert as far north as Mount Rainier. Mr. Martin is an expert technician.

Bulletin No. 4, May 3, 1926.



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WORKING NEAR THE FIRING-LINE

The lineman is repairing wires close to the huge oil tank, which the firemen are trying to keep below the explosion temperature. This $2,000,000 fire on Long Island caused one of the greatest calls for fire apparatus that New York City has ever known (see Bulletin No. 2).

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A PRIEST OF PU-TO SEES HOW IT LOOKS

The lovely island of Pu-to, or Pootoo, one of the Chusan group, is one of the three most famous sites of Chinese Buddhism. Two thousand or more monks live here. At first they resented being photographed by a member of the National Geographic Society's staff, but after looking through the camera themselves they were delighted to pose. (See Bulletin No. 4.)